

SECRETMEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Conversation between King Zog and []
 Those present: King Zog and []

1. I talked with King Zog at his villa in Alexandria on 26 and 27 October. The initial subject discussed was the intelligence team which he has agreed to furnish for the purpose of making a five to six week reconnaissance of Albania in order to establish contact with and determine the present whereabouts and status of various officers in the armed forces and other individuals in the present Albanian Government who may be willing to act in conjunction with an outside supported operation to overthrow the Hoxha regime. King Zog stated that he had selected the two officers who will be the principal intelligence agents, and that four guides who are presently in Greece will be selected to take these officers into Albania and escort them where necessary. The names of the individuals concerned have been made a matter of record elsewhere. King Zog further stated that in order to prepare the six-man team for infiltration, it would be necessary for Col. Selmani and Irfan Bey to go to Greece to recruit the four guides and to get the team on its way. I suggested that it would be preferable if all Albanians involved in the operation who were presently outside Greece were brought to Athens in a clandestine manner, possibly by special aircraft from Germany. This principle was agreed to by King Zog, who added that as far as Col. Selmani is concerned he could probably enter Greece legally without difficulty as it was the King's plan to send Col. Selmani out of Egypt as an escort for the King's sisters, who will go on to Paris while Selmani left them somewhere en route and went on to Greece in connection with the preparation of the team. The King also said that it would be very desirable to send a W/T operator with the party and even two W/T sets if their bulk and weight would not be too much for the team to carry into the interior.

2. It was agreed with the King that when the proper time arrives the two officers will proceed to Germany, either as tourists or transients, and will register at a hotel to be specified to him by me at a later date. These men will be furnished with a telephone number in Munich or Frankfurt through which they will announce their arrival. The same will presumably apply to Irfan Bey and possibly Col. Selmani. After these people have identified themselves by telephone, they will be picked up by someone in Germany and flown to Greece where their presence will be kept secret. In Greece the two agents will undergo a certain amount of training and briefing by our people, while Irfan Bey and Col. Selmani will be enabled to get in touch with and recruit the four guides. It was agreed by the King that at all appropriate times the team would make favorable reference to the National Committee for Free Albania. In connection with this the King again repeated his former assurances that he favored the Committee and was exerting his influence to maintaining unity within it.

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3. As regards the timing of the operation, I told the King that we wished to infiltrate the men at such time of year as to give them the maximum possibility for carrying out their mission effectively, and suggested that he query his officers as to whether they would prefer to go in now or in the spring. The King promised to get their reaction on this question and on the following day he told me that he had spoken with his people and it was their view that although they were ready to go in any time we wished, they would probably have a better chance of survival if they went in during the spring. The King himself suggested that the most appropriate time for infiltration would be about 20 March. Discussion of the infiltration operation was concluded with the understanding that the King would keep his two officers on hand in Egypt and would await instructions from us as to when to send them to Germany.

4. In regard to the question of his own plans for the immediate future, King Zog stated that he had sold his Alexandria villa to a son of King Ibn Saud, and had taken the Hotel Mediterranean in Alexandria for three months in order to have a place for himself, his family and his retinue to live in. Following this three month period he proposes to go to France for about six months and then to the United States.

5. As regards the general international situation, the King expressed great concern about the growing friction between the Arab world and the West because he felt that this friction is reducing the possibilities for the creation of an effective force to fight any Soviet penetration into the Middle East. He had expressed himself previously as feeling that through proper training, indoctrination and equipping with arms, it would be possible to develop a force of a million or more men in countries like Abyssinia, the Sudan, etc., in order to attack, harass and destroy any Soviet armed forces that may seek to penetrate toward the Suez Canal.

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